

### A Man's Empty Heart.

It seems so strange  
That any man should never set his heart  
On anything—but live apart  
From dear desire  
And from laughing hope!  
Without whose kindly beacon ray  
We're like poor mariners astray  
Without a compass.  
Our lives would be so tame,  
If we should be content to grasp  
Only the things our hand could clasp  
Without much striving.  
We cannot always  
Hope to attain our aim—but still,  
By fearing to attempt, we will  
Gain simply nothing  
Oh! we would miss  
So much unless we dared the fear  
Of losing things which are not here,  
But farther on.  
Even if we lose  
The hope on which our heart was set  
There comes for every vain regret  
Some compensation.  
Remembrance of  
Anticipation soothes the pain  
Of bitter loss, and helps us gain  
Courage and hope.  
To have known defeat  
Makes us more kind to griefs that lay  
Within the hours of every day  
In other people's lives.  
And when we win!  
Attainment gives us strength to bear  
Each added pain and added care  
That comes to us.  
Then dare the strife!  
For o'er defeat's dark clouds there come  
The lights of many a victory won,  
Which blessed our life.

—Bessie Donaldson.

### An Expensive Lesson.

Mrs. Piercy was not in a good humor that day, as she sat at the breakfast-table pouring coffee for her husband, and dispensing bread and butter to the three plump little Piercys. She was a handsome, overdressed woman, with a good deal of false hair, frizzed and puffed and braided on the top of her head, and a complexion that bore remote witness to the constant use of cosmetics. And Mr. Piercy, at his end of the table, was evidently ill at ease, as he broke his eggs and nibbled diligently at his roll.

"But what was I to do, my dear?" said he, after a brief silence which was by no means peaceful.

"Do?" shrilly retorted Mrs. Piercy. "Why, what do other people do? Are we to keep a home for the indigent poor? Or a refuge for the widowed and fatherless?"

"My dear, my dear," pleaded Mr. Piercy, who was a small man, with thin hair and spectacles, "you may be a widow yourself, some day."

"And if I am, I shall not go begging among my relatives, that you may depend on," said Mrs. Piercy. "And, after all, she isn't any relative of yours—only your brother's wife! I'd like to know what earthly claim she has upon you! I declare, the more I think of it the more I am amazed at the woman's presumption. Her very name is an aggravation, too. 'Plume Piercy,' indeed! I'll wager my new lace-trim that she was a second-rate actress when she married your brother. No, Mr. Piercy, if you think that I—"

But here the torrent of the lady's eloquence was cut short by the unexpected appearance on the scene of the very subject of her objurgation—a tall, pretty woman of about four and twenty, whose wavy, golden tresses and delicately fair complexion contrasted vividly with the deep mourning weeds she wore.

"A veil down to her feet," mentally ejaculated Mrs. Abel Piercy. "And a six-inch bias band of the very best Courtland crape on her gown. I wonder who's expected to pay for all this?"

Abel Piercy, the kindest-hearted of little men, welcomed his brother's widow with genuine hospitality; but Matilda, his wife, looked askance at her, with no friendly smile upon her countenance.

"Of course you will consider this your home," said Mr. Piercy, as he made haste to draw a chair close to the fire.

"Until you are able to suit yourself somewhere else," crisply added his wife.

The widow said little; she only looked, with large, wistful eyes, from one to the other, as she sat there, the morning sunshine turning her fair locks to braided masses of gold, the pearly delicacy of her skin arousing the liveliest envy in Mrs. Abel's heart.

"Though, of course, it's only some French balm, or Circassian cream or other, that I haven't heard of," said she to herself.

But, after Mr. Piercy had buttoned on his overcoat and gloves, he came back to the breakfast-room, while his wife was putting up the children's school-lunches in the pantry.

"I am not much of a talker, Plume," said he, in an odd, hesitating way; "but you are welcome, my dear—very welcome! And I hope you will try to feel

at home. Don't mind Matilda—just at first. She's a little peculiar, Matilda is, but I do assure you she—"

"Mr. Piercy!" uttered a sharp, warning voice, at this instant, from the threshold, "is it possible that you haven't started yet? And you know how particular Budge and Bodley are as to your getting to the store at nine precisely."

Mr. Piercy turned pink all over. "Yes, my dear—yes," said he, "I'm quite sure to be in time!"

And off he started on a gentle trot. When he was gone, Plume took off her bonnet and veil, removed her mantle and gloves, and went into the kitchen.

"Cannot I do something to help you, Sister Matilda?" said she, pleadingly.

Mrs. Abel Piercy looked, with cold blue eyes and lips primly compressed, at the fair face, which was younger and fresher than ever without the jet-black circlet of the bonnet, and the slight, graceful figure before her.

"No, I thank you," said she. "I am not used to have fine ladies in my kitchen."

"But if you will lend me an apron—"

"No, I thank you, Mrs. Oswald Piercy," repeated the housewife. "You will find the newspaper in the hall—Perhaps the advertising columns may interest you."

"We are sisters," said the young widow, with a quivering lip. "Will you not call me Plume?"

"Oh, no, we're no relations at all, in reality," said Mrs. Abel Piercy, weighing out ounces of sugar and pounds of flour with an unerring hand. "And really, your name is such a very peculiar one. Jane, or Martha, or Eliza, would have been more to my taste. Perhaps, however," with a keen, sidelong glance, "you have been on the stage?"

"No," said Plume, "I was a teacher when Oswald married me. But what did you mean about the advertising columns of the paper?"

"Situations, you know," said Mrs. Piercy, reaching over to the raisin-box. "Bridget, you have been at these raisins, as true as I live! There's half of 'em gone since I was here last."

"No, mum, I haven't!" sharply responded Bridget, who was used to these kitchen skirmishes. "Sure I never lived in a house before where they counted the raisins and the lumps of coal, and if I don't suit, mum, it's a month's warning from to-day, if ye's please."

"Situations!" repeated Plume, half afraid of Bridget's warlike demeanor, half puzzled at her sister-in-law's words.

"Yes," said Mrs. Abel, tartly, paying no attention to Bridget and her skilful—in a glove-factory, you know, or a fancy store, or even as nursery governess or attendant to some elderly invalid. For of course, you know," with another of those oblique looks that made Plume feel so uncomfortable, "you expect to work for your living. We are not rich enough to support all our relations. Abel's salary was reduced last year, and no one knows how strictly I have to economize in order to make both ends meet. And a strong young woman like you ought not to sit down on a sickly man with a family, like my husband, because—"

"Stop—oh, stop!" said Plume, lifting up her hand, as if to ward off some invisible terror. "He said I was welcome. He told me—"

"That's just like Abel!" said Mrs. Piercy, scornfully. "He'd take in all creation if he could. He never stops to think whether he can afford it or not."

"I am sorry that I intrude," said Plume, with dignity. "It shall not be for long. I will look at the newspaper at once."

"Yes, that's a deal the best plan," assented Mrs. Piercy, ungraciously. "Of course you won't mention our little chat to Abel. He might be vexed; and, after all, I'm only speaking for your good."

Plume looked at her with an expression of face which somehow made Mrs. Abel Piercy feel as if she were shrinking up like a withered walnut in its shell.

"Yes, I know," said she. "But you need not be afraid; I am no tale-bearer, to make mischief in any one's family."

Mrs. Piercy felt very uncomfortable after this little conversation was ended.

"How she did look at me!" thought she. "But I only spoke the truth, after all. We can't be burdened with her support, let Abel talk as he pleases. And no matter what she says, I believe she has been an actress! No one but an actress could ever put on such royal ways as that!"

Half an hour afterward, when the bell rang, and some one inquired for Mrs. Oswald Piercy, Mrs. Abel nodded her head to the cake she was taking out of the oven.

"Company already," said she; "and

gentleman company, as I live! Well, if this is the way she intends to go on, the sooner she suits herself with a situation the better!"

Mrs. Piercy had been secretly anxious for an opportunity of quarreling with her sister-in-law. Here it was at last; and when the old gentleman with the glossy broadcloth suit was gone, she bounced into the parlor with a red spot on either cheek-bone like signals of war.

"So you have been receiving company, Mrs. Oswald?" said she.

"Yes," Plume innocently answered. "Gentleman company, too!" cried Mrs. Piercy.

"It was Mr. Van Orden, my husband's lawyer," explained Plume.

"Oh, I dare say!" said Mrs. Piercy. "All that sounds very well; but I have the character of my house to look to, and—"

"He is coming back with a carriage," hurriedly spoke Plume. "I am to go to his wife's house at once. Mrs. Van Orden is willing to give me the shelter which my own relatives grudge me!"

"I wish her joy of her bargain, I am sure," said Mrs. Abel Piercy, with a toss of the mountains of false hair that crowned her head.

And so the two women parted, in no spirit of amity.

"I dare say she'll go straight to the store," thought Mrs. Abel, "and invent a pitiful story for my husband's benefit. And Abel will make a great fuss—Abel was always soft about his relatives—but I shan't mind it. I always have been mistress in my own house, and I always intend to be, Oswald's widow or no Oswald's widow."

Nevertheless, she could not help feeling a little apprehensive when her husband came in to tea. For when Abel really was angry, his anger signified something. But to her surprise he entered all smiles, and rubbing his palms, gleefully.

"So Plume has gone?" said he.

"Yes," said Mrs. Piercy, pretending to be busy with a knot in the second child's shoe. "She has gone. But how did you know it?"

"Van Orden stopped at the store to tell me," answered Mr. Piercy. "Strange, wasn't it? And quite romantic, too."

"What on earth is the man talking about?" said Mrs. Piercy, aroused at last into something like active interest. "Why, didn't Plume tell you? It seems that those last investments that poor Oswald fancied he had beggared himself with, have turned up trump cards after all. And Van Orden tells me that Oswald's widow is worth one hundred and fifty thousand dollars."

Mrs. Abel Piercy turned first green, then crimson. For the fatal blunder she had committed! Alas for the ruined chances of her three little girls to inherit their aunt's money! She made some trivial excuse about a forgotten pocket-handkerchief, and went up stairs to weep the bitterest tears she had ever shed.

It was a lesson to her, but it was an expensive one. For Plume Piercy, although she always remained on the most excellent terms with her kind little brother-in-law, never crossed Mrs. Abel's threshold again. She had been too deeply stung—too bitterly insulted there.

"And it's all my own fault," sadly reflected Mrs. Abel. "Oh, dear, oh, dear! why can't we see a little way into the future?"

### Oyster Schools.

It is common to quote the oyster as the lowest example of stupidity, or absence of anything mental; and as it is a headless creature, the accusation might not seem wholly unfounded. Yet the oyster is not such a fool but that it can learn by experience; for Diquemasse asserts that, if it be taken from a depth never uncovered by the sea, it opens its shell, loses the water within and perishes. But oysters taken from the same depth, if kept in reservoirs where they are occasionally left uncovered for a short time, learn to keep their shells closed, and then live for a much longer time when taken out of the water. This fact is also stated by Bingley, and is now turned to practical account in the so-called "oyster schools" of France. The distance from the coast to Paris being too great for the newly-dredged oysters to travel without opening their shells, they are first taught in the schools to bear a longer and longer exposure to the air without gaping, and when their education in this respect is completed, they are sent on their journey to the metropolis, where they arrive with closed shells and in a healthy condition.

Statistics show that not quite one-third of the population in the United States is foreign born, or foreign in the second degree. Of the 15,000,000 included in the above computation, about 4,500,000 have Irish fathers.

### DETERMINED DUELISTS.

The Hostile Meeting Between Graham and Walker.

In a recent number of the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, a Forty-Niner gives some interesting recollections of old-time duels on the western coast. Himself an adherent of the code of honor that demanded reparation for real or fancied insult, the details of the duel as related by one of the participants, is unusually interesting. He says:

The first duel that I was concerned in was between a young man from Philadelphia, named Graham, and General Walker, afterwards of Nicaragua fame. It grew out of a violent attack on the county court, of which Judge Morrison was the head, in the San Francisco *Herald*, by Walker, who was one of the editors. Young Graham was a protegee of Judge Morrison, and without consulting him he wrote a very denunciatory letter to Walker, which resulted in a challenge. Graham had the choice of weapons, and he chose revolvers, at eight paces; at the word to advance and fire until either or both of the parties were killed. At that time I was stationed at Sacramento, and one evening I received a letter from Graham begging me for God's sake to come down on the first boat, that he was in trouble and wanted me at once. I got ready as quickly as possible and caught the evening boat, wondering what sort of a scrape Graham had got himself into, never dreaming of a duel. I arrived at San Francisco late at night and went at once to Graham's room, where I found him in consultation with his friends. I was there informed of what had occurred, and the pleasant news was imparted to me that I had been chosen his fighting second. Here was a row between two men, with either of whom I had but a slight acquaintance, and in whom I had no particular interest. The terms were unusually sanguinary and the affair would probably terminate in the death of one or both. Under the code if one of the principals showed the white feather his second was obliged to take his place and fight it out. It was a situation that I did not relish in the least. I knew that Walker was a regular fire eater and would fight to the death, but Graham I was not exactly sure of. His terms were bloody enough, but then he had never been tried, and if the thing went on, he might weaken and I have to take it up. I labored with him to obtain some modification of his terms. I told him that they were so sanguinary that Walker would be justified in declining them. We sat up all night, and tried our best to bring about a peaceable adjustment, but it was of no use. The fight was to come off at 9 o'clock in the morning, and, finding no escape, I was obliged to make the best of it. We had our breakfast and took a carriage for the dueling grounds. On the way Graham told me that he was a dead shot, and that he intended to kill Walker on the first fire. I halted the carriage, and told him I would not go a step further if that was his purpose. If he were the expert marksman that he claimed to be it would be a little less than murder, and I proposed to wash my hands of the affair unless he would promise to wing his man instead of killing him. At last he agreed to it, and we went ahead. On the ground we found Walker and his second, who was Captain Folsom, of the army. I tried to effect an adjustment of the difficulty, but without success. I had taken the precaution to dress my man in black from head to foot, without a particle of white anywhere visible. Walker was in a blue swallow tailed coat, with buff vest and black pants. His coat was buttoned, and below his breast the light line of his vest could be seen. The impending fight was known to the whole of San Francisco, and, as it was Sunday, not less than 5000 people were on the grounds. Among the most interested spectators was Alexander Wells, then Chief Justice of California. The ground was measured, pegs driven, and I won the word. The men were placed in position and the signal given: "Gentlemen, are you ready? Fire! one, two, three, halt!" At the word both wheeled and fired. Walker stood still, but Graham advanced one pace and both fired again. After this I called a halt, and, going to Folsom, tried to bring about a compromise, but no use. Walker had his blood up and proposed to kill or be killed then and there. I went to Graham and told him that all parleying was at an end; that Walker proposed to kill him if he could, and that I absolved him from the promise made in the carriage, as he must fight for his life. I remember distinctly how excited the Chief Justice became as he rushed up and down the line, swinging his arms and crying to the crowd, "Keep out of the line of fire, gentlemen; keep out of the line of fire." At last the word was given, both pistols cracked, and Walker

spun around on his heel and fell into Folsom's arms. They tore open his clothing and found that the ball had entered the body just where the white line of vest showed below the coat. It was supposed, of course, that it had passed through the bowels, as it came out on the opposite side, but it was afterward ascertained, upon a careful examination, that by a most fortunate accident it had glanced and run around the lining of the abdomen, just under the skin, so that the wound was in reality but slight. Both were satisfied and became warm friends. Graham accompanied Walker on his Nicaragua expedition and was killed there.

### Red Fish Lake.

Nestled amid the lofty peaks of the Rocky mountains, away up in the Sawtooth range, in Idaho, at an elevation of 8000 feet above the sea level, writes a correspondent, lies the beautiful Lake Tahoma. Beautiful lakes are no rare thing in these mountains, but, amid them all, it would be hard to find one presenting a more perfect picture of quiet beauty than this. Idaho means "Gem of the Mountains," and surely, Lake Tahoma deserves to be called the Gem of Idaho. It is not large, being only about three miles long and one mile wide.

Where the water of this lake is eighteen or twenty feet deep you can see the pebbles on the bottom, and the fish darting about, as plainly as though they were in a glass globe. Then the bottom of the lake breaks off suddenly and descends almost perpendicularly several hundred feet, from which point the water grows rapidly deeper toward the middle of the lake. It is said that it has been sounded to the depth of 2700 feet, but the story is not well authenticated. It has, however, been measured, with a wire line, 1000 feet without finding bottom, and it has been estimated by surveyors that its greatest depth may correspond with the height of the highest peak in its vicinity, which is 1500 feet, though no accurate measurement has yet been attempted.

The water, besides being very cold, possesses some peculiarity which makes it very difficult to keep afloat in it, or, as a man expressed it: "There is no substance to the water, and a man can't swim easily." The lake is full of fish of different kinds. It is often called Red Fish Lake, on account of a brilliant red fish that swarms its waters. Their remarkable beauty charms the eye; their peculiar habits well repay a close study and observation, and when served hot for breakfast no daintier dish could be desired. They are quite large, weighing from two and a half to four pounds. Their bodies are a bright red, and the head and fins are a light brown. They look in the water like scarlet satin. The male has a decided hump on his back, and a turned up nose, while the female is perfectly straight. In the spawning season they run up the creeks that feed the lake in vast numbers, to the gravel beds in shallow water. They dart hither and thither so swiftly and in such a multitude that the water seems, at times, an almost solid mass of color. They must live on animalcules, for no food is ever found in their stomachs, nor are their digestive organs fitted for solid food. They will not take bait of any kind, but are speared and taken like salmon, to whom I suppose they must bear some family relation. When the young are hatched, they soon seek the deeper waters of the lake, and then disappear, probably going to the deepest part, where they remain until nearly full grown, or about three years.

### The Position for Sleeping.

A German, Baron Reichenbach, has occupied many years in studying the art of bedmaking, or rather bedplanning, and maintains that improperly placed beds will shorten a man's life. He says: If a mere magnet exercises an influence on sensitive persons, that earth's magnetism must certainly make itself felt on the nervous life of man. In whatever hemisphere you may be, always sleep with your feet to the equator, and let your body lie as true as a needle to the pole." The proper direction of the body is of the utmost importance for the proper circulation of the blood, and many disturbances in the organisms have been cured by simply placing the bolster at a different point of the compass from that it had occupied. Let such as have hitherto been in the habit of sleeping with their feet where their head ought to be, take to heart the example of the late Dr. Fischwester, of Magdeburg who died recently at the age of 109 years. The most unhealthy position, we are told, is when the body lies east and west. Some observers assure us that to sleep in such a position is tantamount to committing suicide, and that diseases are often aggravated by deviations from the proper posture.

### Spurs and Whips.

The history of spurs is both curious and entertaining. The earliest form of spur was a single goad or sharp point.

The dashing young knights of the feudal times had a great love for decorating their spurs with jewels.

In the tournaments they used spurs with mottoes on the shanks. One such had "A true knight and I" on one side, and "Anger me and try" on the other.

By ancient custom, the chorister boys in the cathedrals can claim "spur money" if anybody enters the sacred edifice with spurs on:

If you bring in spur or hat,  
Sixpence you pay—be sure of that.

The whip was not so knightly as the spur; it however took part in several old customs.

In the ancient city of York was a day called whip-dog day, on which the boys were accustomed to go around and whip every dog they met. This originated in the following peculiar fact. A priest once celebrating mass dropped the pix, which an unreligious dog snapped up and swallowed.

The profane beast was hung, and for years his species was subjected to torment for his outrageous impiety. That was, of course, in the good old times.

Another humane game connected with the whip was this: A rooster was tied to the branch of a tree. The players were blindfolded and presented with long whips. They were then led to a little distance, and commenced lashing in all directions, the fun consisting in the smart cuts they gave one another. The one who struck the rooster first, and made him cry out, won the game.

The old game of whip-top is as old as history. In Dryden's translation of Virgil's *Æneid* we read:

As young striplings whip the top for sport  
On the smooth pavement of the empty court.

Two hundred years ago men played whip-top as eagerly as the boys, and in some villages a "town top" was provided for the amusement of the poor.

### Pugnacious Ponies.

Ponies are common in India, but the quaintest of them all is a little fellow run to seed and called the tattoo. A correspondent of the London *Field* furnishes the following description: It is a pony with few redeeming qualities to set off against a whole stableful of virtues; but among his very questionable virtues may be reckoned his pugnacity. So great is this, that it would be quite useless to keep Indian tattoos, like cocks, for fighting purposes. If decently fed, groomed, and but moderately worked, they will become as high couraged as game cocks, and as ready to rush at one another, and to do battle to the death, as birds in the pit. A chestnut pony of this sort—a child's pony, too—has been known to bite off the ear of another pony for his breakfast, and to assimilate a very considerable portion of the tail of another tattoo in the course of the afternoon. When hard worked and ill fed—as he generally is in a native stable—the tattoo's pugnacity, for which one cannot but give him credit, is turned into a stubbornness that would astonish a donkey. Nothing will move him, not even a rope round his fore leg, backed up by profanity and blows. A stoic might admire the animal when in this mood if he did not belong to himself. But perhaps after the five fat natives within the box on wheels, to which the tattoo is attached, have given up all hopes of moving for that day and have betaken themselves to the chewing of betel nut as a solacing and philosophical employment of the hour, the cunning and malicious tattoo will make a sudden and unexpected dash forward with the reins about his heels, when may be witnessed the edifying spectacle of five fat baboos laid upon the road at equal distances, just like the eggs and the basket, as in athletic performances. The tattoo's mind, such as it is, is, in fact, against every man and every man's hand is against him. But although morally bad and physically unlovely there are good points about the brute after all. It may take time to discover them, still there are hopes for the tattoo of the future.

### The Nails.

The growth of the nails is more rapid in children than in adults and slowest in the aged; goes on faster in the summer than in the winter, so that the same nail which is renewed in one hundred and thirty-two days in winter, requires only one hundred and sixteen in summer. The increase of the nails of the right hand is more rapid than those of the left; moreover, it differs for the different fingers, and in order corresponds with the length of the finger, consequently it is fastest in the middle finger, nearly equal in the two on either side of this, slower in the little finger and slowest in the thumb. The growth of all the nails on the left hand requires eighty-two days more than those of the right.